

Moving From Inviting to Inclusion to Radical Welcome

As you consider this grid, ask yourself the following questions:

- Which of these models best describes your church’s current reality, in general?
- What observations bring you to that conclusion?
- Who is The Other for you? What oppressed/marginalized group do you feel most compelled to welcome?
- What might this group’s experience be in your congregation? What barriers would they encounter? Can I set up One-to-One conversations or find other ways to learn what they feel is truly welcoming?
- What signs would you see in your congregation if you became radically welcoming to The Other?

	Inviting	Inclusion	Radical Welcome
The Message	“Come, join our community and share our cultural values and heritage.”	“Help us to be diverse.”	“Bring your culture, your voice, your whole self—we want to engage in truly mutual relationship.”
The Goal	assimilation: community invites new people to enter and adopt dominant identity	incorporation: community welcomes marginalized groups, but no true shift in congregation’s cultural identity and practices	incarnation: community embodies and expresses the full range of voices and gifts present, including The Other
The Effort	Systems and programs in place to invite and incorporate newcomers into existing structures and identity; rejection or marginalization of those who do not assimilate	Stated commitment to inclusivity, but less attention to ongoing programs, systemic analysis or power; emphasis on individual efforts	Systems and programs in place to invite and welcome people, including those from the margins; to ensure their presence, gifts and perspective will be visible and valued; and to ensure that these new communities, gifts and values influence the congregation’s identity, ministries and structures
The Result	Healthy numbers (perhaps with some members who claim marginal identity) but institution and its membership is overwhelmingly monocultural	Revolving door, with people coming from margins only to stay on fringe or leave; institutional structure remains monocultural, with some pockets of difference	Transformed and transforming community with open doors and open hearts; different groups share power and shape identity, mission, leadership, worship and ministries